

# THE BELLOWS

31 GREAT YEAR

October 15, 2009

Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc.

Vol XXXI No. 2

WHAT	NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSPCS
WHERE	DES MOINES MASONIC TEMPLE 2208 S. 223rd St. (Take Midway exit #149 west off I-5...go to first stop light west of Pacific Hwy. South...Turn right.)
WHEN	Thursday, October 15th 7:00 till 10:00 p.m. (doors open about 6:00 p.m.)
WHY	A short business meeting...Show & Tell..Auction (one item lot per member)...Door Prize...Member's trade and sell tables (free to members, please ignore during business meeting.) <u>Program:</u> Bring your favorite pre 1940 camera or photographica item to show and explain. A neat camera..a great find..a really good shooter..a rare "one of a kind" object

## AND SO IT BEGINS:

No, I don't mean the season of harvest and halloween. I mean it is time once again for each PSPCS member, who lives in the Puget Sound area, to consider volunteering to be a 2010 member of your Club's Show Committee. We are always looking for "new blood", fresh ideas, renewed energy and a desire to have an important part in making our Club's 30th big yearly event an even better Sale & Show than we have had in the past.

To be a member of our Show Committee will not take too much of your time. We hold an organization meeting on Wednesday, November 11th at Bill Kimber's home in the Tacoma area. There is no meeting in December as we all celebrate the Season. In Jan. Feb. and March we hold meetings before our regular Club meeting. In April we gather at the home of Bob and Pam Kelly to make sure all is in readiness for our Show Experience Weekend on the weekend of May 1st.

Being a Show Committee member will also provide you with some nice perks. You will get to be in on the planning and development of the Show. You will become better acquainted with your fellow committee members. You will receive a free Show table and have the very first chance to look for "treasures" as the Show sets up. Also, there will be several festive gatherings of Committee members as we plan, and then review, how successful was our 2010 show.

Please be ready to sign up at our October meeting. If you can't be at the meeting just contact me and I will add you to the list. Thank you. (2009 Show Chairman Bill Kimber)

## GIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER A TRY:

These days everyone seems to be using the internet to advertise what they want..or want to sell. This is all well and good but don't forget about your newsletter...The Bellows. As a paid up member you are welcome to send short announcements of your photographica desires to me by snail mail. They will run in The Bellows free of charge to you. Will you get a response? Who knows...but why not give it a try...it is, after all, FREE!

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## THIS MONTH'S MYSTERY QUESTION:

With thanks to the Western Photographic Historical Society

Answer at end of Newsletter

What round camera took 5-inch diameter glass plates?



★ ★ ★ BACKSIDE INFORMATION ★ ★ ★

The September 17th meeting of the Puget Sound Photographic Collectors Society was called to order by our new president, Mike Immel, at 7:00 p.m. There were 24 members and guests in attendance. Our new Secretary, Stan Kirlin, read the minutes of the June meeting and they were approved as read. Treasurer Shirley was on an east coast cruise so there was no treasurers' report. It was hoped she had not needed to dip into Club funds to pay for her cruise.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bill Kimber reported that the 2010 Show deposit had been paid for our May first Show. Sign-up for the 2010 Show Committee will be at the October meeting. (see page one) Bill reported that our 2009 Show had finished a bit in the red. Bill urged members to attend the Photo History XIV symposium on October 16, 17, and 18 in Rochester, New York.

NEW BUSINESS:

Member, Bob Gross, is recovering from a stroke and Stan will send a card from the Club wishing him a speedy recovery.

Stan Kirlin proposed what he called, "Earn That Camera". His idea being that a camera, donated by a member, would be shown at our meeting. A present willing members name will be picked and he/she will have until the following meeting to research and prepare a presentation about the camera. After the presentation the presenter will be the happy new owner of the camera. Stan has volunteered to donate the first two or three cameras. The members expressed interest and suport with a unanimous vote to begin "Earn That Camera" with a November presentation.

PROGRAM..SHOW & TELL:

Eight to ten members had summer finds or tales of the hunt to share. Thank you all. Darrel reportd that he had been choosen Washington Mason of the Year and thanked the Club for the many enjoyable years he had been Club President.

AUCTION AND DOOR PRIZE:

An older McKeown price guide went for \$5.00, a Nishika went for \$5.00, a PSPCS belt buckle for \$11.00 and a neat box of photographica "stuff" went for \$26.00

Darrel Womack won the book door prize.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. for more nummie munching, selling and conversation(s).



THE BELLOWS Newsletter is published 10 times per year by Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc. Information for The Bellows should be send to Bill Kimber, 1413 Weathervane Drive, Tacoma, WA 98466-5712, (253) 564-4046, billkimber@webtv.net

The P.S.P.C.S. internet address is [www.pspcs.org](http://www.pspcs.org)

Dues are \$20.00 per year and should be sent to Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Sparrow, 300 Pease Road, Cle Elum, WA 98922, (509) 674-1916, sesparrow9@msn.com P.S.P.C.S. members receive first notification of our yearly April show.

PRESIDENT: Mike Immel (206) 856-7722 [shutt64@yahoo.com](mailto:shutt64@yahoo.com)



The following is from the newsletter of the Western Photographic Historical Society and is used with thanks. Ed.

### Something Called PHO-TAK

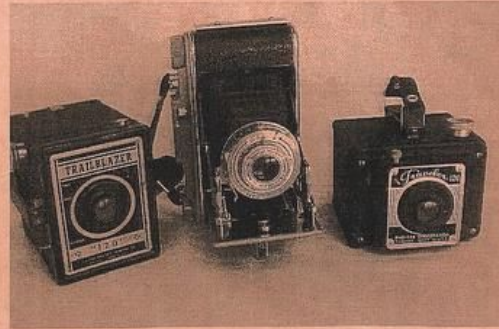
By Ron Kuykendall

Some time ago I obtained a normally appearing, obvious copy of the Argoflex 75. The solid heavy Bakelite camera in a travel case had no attractive features: meniscus lens, fixed shutter, stop, and focus. The flash unit, however, caught my attention; it was a strobe with a "9-foot power cord." The included manual stated a survey found that almost all flash pictures were taken with in 9 feet of an outlet. This created visions of a snapshooter trying to get flash pictures of pretty girls at a party tethered to and entangled in a 9-foot power cord. I found the same unit in a 1958 Wards catalog but with the optional battery pack. The camera was a Reflex II from Pho Tak or sometimes U.S. Camera of Chicago.

Pho Tak was one of those after-the-war phenoms. It marketed the Spartus Press Flash box camera as the Regal Flash Master probably until Utility merged with Spartus after WWII. Pho Tak marketed cameras of its own design beginning about 1948. One was the Trailblazer/Eagle eye/Spectator/Marksman (take your pick) – a metal portrait format box camera with no features and a meniscus lens protruding from the various nameplates on the front of the box. The Traveler-Vagabond series was the same mechanism, lens, etc rotated 90 degrees to a landscape format. Both had square tubular finders attached to the side or top of the box. Both appeared with nameplates from Time-Life, Sears, Wards, Macy's, and I'm sure others as well.

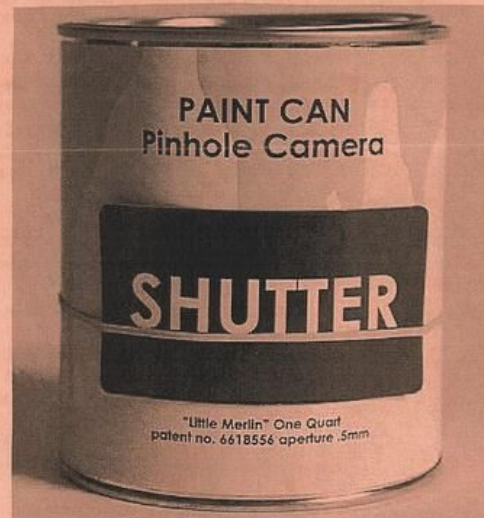
About 1949 Pho Tak marketed a rather solid Bakelite folding camera: Foldex for flash synced version, Rollex and Comet for the non flash version. The viewfinder was teardrop shaped and the shutter release was a small panel on the lens door. One version, about 1953, had a Steinheil Cassar 6.3 anastigmat with a Vario shutter, a combination capable of quite sharp images. Quite competitive with the mass of cheap folders at that time, Pho-Tak cameras were quite solid and are found today usually in good shape with excellent bellows. All Pho-Tak cameras used either 120 or 620 film and were widely marketed.

About 1953 a cheap reflex/box/fake tlr was added to the line. The above mentioned copy of the Argoflex 75 appeared a few years later as the Reflex II. Pho-Tak disappeared from Photography Directory about 1955 as a manufacturer, although U.S. Camera imported rebadged Regula cameras into the early 60's.



### Are You Kidding?

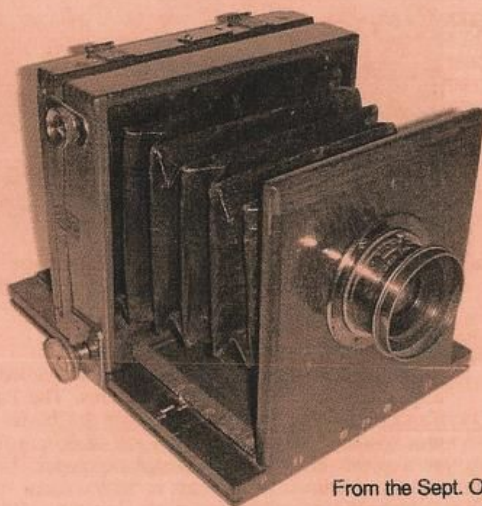
Pinhole photography has long been regarded as a quirky alternative to taking pictures. The Paint Can Pinhole Camera goes back to the basics of photography. All you need is a roll of 35mm film or a piece of light-sensitive photo paper. Load either material into the can in a darkroom then give the lid a good knock to seal it tight. When something catches your eye, simply remove the magnetic strip covering the pinhole to take the shot. Depending on the lighting situation and the type of media you are using, exposure can range from a few seconds to a couple of minutes. Urbanoutfitters is retailing this "camera" for US\$20, but if you have an empty paint can lying around at home, you could probably do-it-yourself for less than a dollar. And



you thought a can of paint meant a messy weekend project.



PSPCS member Ralph London is also a member of the Michigan Photographic Historical Society. In the September-October 2009 Issue of their newsletter, The Photogram, they featured items from members collections. Don't we all wish we had Ralph's question...and the camera to ask it about. Used with thanks. Ed.

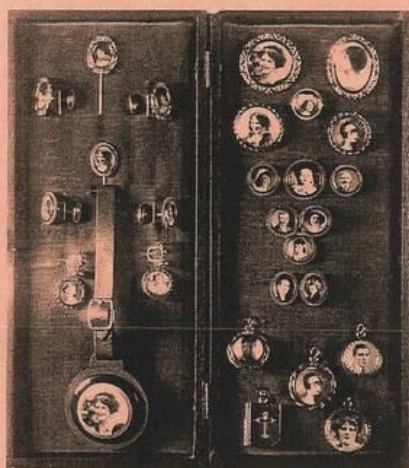


#### LANCASTER OR BILLCLIFF OR ...

Acquired at my first Photographical Historical Society of New England (PHSNE) Show in October 1989, this beautiful quarter-plate, wood and brass tailboard camera remains a favorite and still unidentified twenty years later. It has a Ross London lens: 5 inch, Goerz Patent Double Anastigmat, F: 7.7. The only camera markings are "XXVIII" twice where the plate holder goes, and "XXVIII" once on the ground glass frame. I assumed it would not be difficult to identify. The first expert I asked replied it was clearly English, perhaps Lancaster. Another knowledgeable authority thinks it is possibly Lancaster or Billcliff. Ideas, please.

— RALPH LONDON, PORTLAND, OR

From the Sept. Oct. 2008 Michigan Photographic Historical Society. Thanks Ed.



#### Photographic Jewelry Sample Case, ca. 1890

This image of a salesman's sample case of photographic jewelry includes a watch fob, earrings, cuff links, stickpins, brooches, pendants and pins. Prices for each piece are penciled on the reverse. The picture addresses two of my continuing collecting interests—photographic novelties and photographs of other photographs. Novelties reflect how a radical invention rapidly infiltrated the culture and how initially the medium was almost exclusively a commercial enterprise where entrepreneurs sought unique products to expand their businesses. Early photographs that take other photographs as their subject appeal to me in that they anticipate the 20th century's modernist, self-reflexive examination of the medium itself.

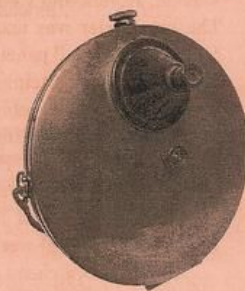
— Jim Jensen, Evanston, IL

So

What round camera took 5-inch diameter glass plates?

Answer: The STIRN Concealed Vest Camera, No.1 was first produced by Western Electric Co. The camera had to be loaded with a round glass plate, 5-inches in diameter. The camera can be hidden in a vest pocket so that the narrow lens opening looks through the vest pocket's buttonhole. The auction record is \$4000 in original wooden box (which doubles the value).

— McKeown



Photos courtesy Rick Soloway

